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The Fabian Society.

ESTABLISHED 1883.

THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1915.

PRESENTED TO THE ANNUAL MEETING ON 14TH MAY, 1915.

THE great war which has dominated our thoughts, and has taken away many of our active members, has adversely affected our finances and has directed our attention towards the difficult problems to which it has given rise.

THE NEW OFFICES.

The outstanding event of the year in the history of the Society is the removal to new offices at 25 Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W. The premises are near to the Houses of Parliament, and include a shop in which our own publications, those of other Socialist organizations, and the works of well known Sociasist authors can be well displayed; a small hall capable of seating from eighty to one hundred persons; the Society's general offices; the offices of the Research Department and the Women's Group; a Common Room for our members; and an additional office which has been sublet to another organization. The hall has been well used for conferences, meetings and lectures by the various groups of the Society. It may be hired by other bodies for a moderate charge.

THE COMMON ROOM.

In taking new premises special consideration was given to the frequently discussed proposal for the establishment of a Common Room for members of the Society which should provide the advantages and conveniences of an inexpensive club. In appealing for contributions to meet the expenses of furnishing the new offices, a sum was asked for which included the estimated cost of furnishing two rooms at 25 Tothill Street for this purpose. Special contributions were made by two members to meet the cost of furniture, provision of cloak room accommodation, etc. At a conference of members held on December 7th it was decided that a Common Room should be instituted, and that membership should be open to members, associates, and subscribers of the Fabian Society who were willing to join and pay a special Common Room subscription. The mini-

mum subscription was fixed at ten shillings for town and seven shillings and sixpence for country members, with a reduction of two shillings and sixpence to those who became members within a month after admission to the Society.

The invitation to become members having met with a highly satisfactory response, a meeting of those who had joined was held on February 9th, when a Common Room Committee was appointed and rules were adopted.

The Common Room has been well used, especially before and after the various meetings held at the Fabian Hall. There is smoking accommodation and provision for chess and other games. Tea, coffee, etc., are served at low prices.

The number of members on March 31st was 324.

Meetings of the Society.

Fourteen meetings—two less than in 1913-14—have been held in the past year, because during the special series of lectures at Kingsway Hall, elsewhere referred to, the number was reduced to one a month.

The attendance of members showed a great improvement compared with the previous year, especially when the lectures were on subjects connected with the war. The practice of sending out invitation cards with the News, begun last year, has also helped to secure larger audiences.

The Annual Business Meeting was mainly occupied with the discussion on the Annual Report and other Society matters.

The December Business Meeting discussed the proposal that Labor Party Parliamentary candidates should be designated Labor and Socialist candidates if they so desired. The proposal was not approved. The constitution of the Summer School was amended. A proposal to allow local Fabian Societies to have a basis of their own (with the sanction of the Executive) was rejected.

The February Business Meeting was chiefly devoted to the discussion of a motion (which was defeated) that the Fabian Society should initiate a peace campaign.

The list of meetings was as follows :—

"What Socialism means to me."

April	3.	Mrs. Pember Reeves
April	24.	St. John G. Ervine

Miscellaneous.

May	8.	"The Working and Effect of the Trade Boards Act of 1909"	R. H. Tawney
Oct.	9.	"International Socialism and the War." Discussion opened by	R. C. K. Ensor
Oct.	23.	"Guild Socialism"	G. D. H. Cole
Nov.	13.	"The Austro-Serbian Dispute and the Future of the Southern Slavs"	R. W. Seton Watson
Jan.	8.	"Finance and the War"	Sidney Webb
Jan.	22.	"The Conditions of Peace." Discussion opened by	Mabel Atkinson
Feb.	12.	"Russia in Time of War"	Julius West

Feb. 26. "The Problem of Turkey in Europe and Asia Minor" ... ... SIR EDWIN PEARS
Mar. 26. "Labor and the War: what the Workers' National Committee has done"
SUSAN LAWRENCE and WM. STEPHEN SANDERS

MEMBERS' MEETINGS.

May 22. Annual Meeting.
Dec. 11. Business Meeting. Summer School. The Basis.
Mar. 12. Business Meeting. Labor Annual. The War.

COURSE OF LECTURES AT KINGSWAY HALL.

A course of six lectures entitled "The Re-distribution of Income" was given by Bernard Shaw on Wednesdays, October 28th to December 2nd inclusive, at Kingsway Hall. The lectures attracted large audiences, and on several evenings there were over 2,000 persons present. The result of the lectures was satisfactory, a considerable sum being added to the funds of the Society, a large amount of literature being sold, and some additional members and associates being enrolled.

BELGIAN MEETING.

A meeting in aid of the Fund for the Relief of Distress in Belgium was held at King's Hall, Covent Garden, on December 16th. The audience, which numbered over 800, was addressed by M. Emile Vandervelde, Belgian Minister of State and chairman of the International Socialist Bureau; M. Emile Verhaeren, who read an original poem, entitled "Ceux de Liège"; Professor Gilbert Murray and Mr. H. M. Hyndman. Sir Sydney Olivier, K.C.M.G., occupied the chair. The net proceeds of sale of tickets, together with contributions received by the Society at and after the meeting, amounted to £80. In addition to this sum a collection at the door on behalf of the Comité Officiel de Secours aux Victimes Belges de la Guerre realised £23.

TRACT PUBLICATION.

The sales of our Tracts are smaller than last year, owing mainly to the public interest being almost entirely absorbed by the war.

The most successful of the new Tracts was "The War and the Workers," by Sidney Webb, of which 13,000 were distributed and sold, including the copies sent to members. The "Economic Foundations of the Women's Movement," by M. A., and "Socialism and the Arts of Use," by A. Clutton Brock, were both the substance of lectures given to the Society by the authors. It may be mentioned that a demand for the latter Tract has come from a number of art schools, probably owing to the many reviews it received.

The cost of "The War; Women; and Unemployment" has been paid by a member of the Society, and is not included at the cost of printing.

In addition to the usual Leaflets, the Society issued a four-page quarto Memorandum of Suggestions to Local Citizen Committees appointed to deal with distress arising through the war. The total number of the Memorandum circulated was 17,750, a large proportion being distributed free.

Our list of publications in the numbered series now stands :—

	3d.	2d.	1d.	Leaflets	Total
Tracts of previous years ...	1	13	57	8	79
" 1914-15 ...	—	2	2	—	4
	1	15	59	8	83

The new Tracts published are :—

No. 175. "The Economic Foundations of the Women's Movement." By M. A. In cover, 2d.

No. 176. "The War and the Workers." Handbook of some Immediate Measures to Prevent Unemployment and Relieve Distress. By SIDNEY WEBB. 1d.

No. 177. "Socialism and the Arts of Use." By A. CLUTTON BROCK. 1d.

No. 178. "The War; Women; and Unemployment." By THE WOMEN'S GROUP EXECUTIVE. In cover, 2d.

The number of Tracts and Leaflets sold and distributed during recent years is as follows :—

Year ending March	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910
Tracts	48,135	58,882	64,518	87,368	68,302	73,187
Leaflets	23,330*	8,453	15,740	17,235	29,850	23,040
TOTALS	71,465*	67,335	79,740	104,603	98,152	96,227

* Including the Memorandum above mentioned.

	£	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts ...	113	120	196	171	192	173
Cost of Printing	173	156	237	241	363	219

TABLE OF TRACTS PRINTED AND ISSUED DURING YEAR 1914-15.

Price.	Stock 1 April, 14.	Printed during year.	Total.	Stock 31 Mar., 1915.	Distributed during year.	Cost of Printing, Binding, etc., during year.	Proceeds of Sales (estimd.)	Estimd. Sale Value of present stock.
						£	£	£
1s.	300	—	300	290	10	—	—	1
3d.	630	1,030	1,660	1,100	560	9	4	7
2d.	17,986	23,064	41,050	28,058	12,992	47*	40	70
1d.	118,798	33,210	152,008	117,558	34,450	116	68	100
Leaflets	20,180	1,000	21,180	15,600	23,330	1	1	2
Totals	157,894	58,304	216,198	162,606	71,465	£173*	£113	£180
1913-14	167,898	57,331	225,229	157,894	67,335	£156	£120	£180

* In addition the cost of Tract No. 178 was separately paid, as explained.

The following is a statement of the receipts and expenditure on publications through Mr. A. C. Fifield :—

	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts from Publisher...	6	15	25	42	76	56	280	—
Estimated Sales at Office	12	15	25	22	22	25	25	25
Paid to Publisher ...	3	3	58	16	60	149	135	179

Total receipts	£671
Total paid to Publisher	603
Surplus	£68

Value of stock belonging to the Society, at half price, £147.

Book Boxes and Library.

As the result of a considerable amount of circularization of Book Box prospectuses in the early part of the year, the number of boxes applied for showed a substantial increase up to the outbreak of the war as compared with the same period in 1913. Since August the applications have fallen off; but in spite of this, as many boxes have been subscribed for during the past twelve months as in 1913-1914.

The table of subscriptions is as follows :—

Year ending	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910
I. L. P. Branches	25	12	26	24	43	52
Local Fabian Societies ...	—	1	2	9	9	9
Other Socialist Bodies ...	1	2	5	14	14	19
Co-operative Societies ...	29	33	26	21	17	27
Trade Unions	21	21	93	20	26	19
Trades Councils	1	3	6	6	2	5
Miscellaneous	20	25	50	32	39	42
	97	97	208	126	150	173

The increase in applications from I.L.P. Branches is due to the Socialist Educational Classes carried on under the auspices of the Joint Committee of the Independent Labor Party and the Fabian Society.

The use made by members and associates of the Library has again decreased. Last year 151 members borrowed 348 books; this year 121 members borrowed 313. This is partly due to the dislocation caused by the removal to the new offices. Since the establishment of the Common Room in January last, however, greater use is being made of the Library by members.

Annual Fabian Conference.

The Annual Conference of the Executive Committee with the delegates from the local Fabian Societies and local and subject groups was held at Clifford's Inn Hall on Saturday, July 4th, and

was attended by fifty-three delegates, comprising seventeen members of the Executive Committee, thirteen from University Societies, eleven from provincial societies, one from a London local group, and eleven from subject groups. H. M. Hyndman and J. Keir Hardie, M.P., attended as fraternal delegates from the British Socialist Party and the Independent Labor Party respectively, and addressed the Conference. The subjects discussed, after the prolonged consideration, point by point, of the organization and activities of local Fabian societies, with which the Conference opened, included the title under which Parliamentary candidates of the Labor Party should run; the desirability of appointing a committee to consider the Society's Basis; Municipal Provision for Maternity and Infancy; School Clinics and School Feeding and Public Health; Technical Education for Girls; Amendment of the Trades Boards Act, and the Work of the Research Department.

Joint Committee of the I.L.P. and Fabian Society.

The work of this Committee has been confined to the re-organization of the Socialist Educational Classes inaugurated in 1913. A detailed syllabus of the following subjects was drawn up and widely circulated: "The Economic Basis of Socialism," "The Industrial History of Britain," "The British Labor Movement," "Democratic Movements of the 19th Century," "English Local Government: its Organization and Problems," "Scottish Local Government," "The Trade Union Movement in Great Britain: its History and Problems," "The Co-operative Movement: its History and Problems," and "The Life and Works of William Morris." A scheme of class organizers and teachers was arranged, and although circumstances have adversely affected the classes, about were carried on successfully.

The Workers' National Committee.

The Society was represented at a National Conference of delegates of Labor and Socialist organizations throughout the country on August 5th at the House of Commons, at which the effect of the war upon the workers was considered. An Executive Committee was elected under the title of the War Emergency: Workers' National Committee, to frame and carry out a policy for dealing with the social and economic problems due to the war. Sidney Webb, W. Stephen Sanders, and Miss Susan Lawrence, L.C.C., were appointed to the Committee to represent the Society, and ten other members of the Society, including Arthur Henderson, P.C., M.P. (chairman), W. C. Anderson, M.P., Miss Mary MacArthur, Miss Margaret Bondfield, Dr. Marion Phillips, and J. S. Middleton (secretary), are on the Committee as representatives of other bodies. The organizations connected with the Committee include the Labor Party, the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, the General Federation of Trade Unions, the Miners' Federation, the National Union of Railwaymen, the National Transport Workers' Federation, the Women's Trade Union League, the Co-operative

Union, the Women's Co-operative Guild, the Independent Labor Party, and the British Socialist Party. The work of the Committee has been heavy and varied. It has held numerous Conferences and conducted agitations in favor of increased pensions and allowances for soldiers and their dependants and for Government action to prevent the rise of prices of food and fuel. It instituted an elaborate enquiry into alleged war contract scandals and brought the results before the Government and the public. It has sent deputations to Cabinet Ministers and Governments on unemployment, the exemption of children from attendance at school, the employment of women in agriculture, the administration of the Prince of Wales's Relief Fund, etc., etc. The Committee succeeded in securing the appointment of all its women members to the Central Committee for Women's Employment, which carried out a number of useful schemes for dealing with unemployed women. The Workers' National Committee represents the largest body of unified Labor and Socialist opinion ever brought together in this country, the affiliated membership being over four and a half millions. It has become the recognized medium for bringing organized Socialist and Labor influence to bear upon the Government and the public in all questions arising from the war which affect the welfare of the workers.

London Labor Party.

The Society was represented at a provisional conference, held on May 23rd, to consider the formation of a London Labor Party for the promotion of Labor candidatures at county and borough council elections. It was decided that the party should be formed. On July 4th a further conference was held, at which a constitution in harmony with that of the national Labor Party was adopted. Miss Susan Lawrence was appointed a member of the executive committee as a representative of the Society. The first annual conference was held on November 28th, at which a large number of delegates from Trade Union, Labor and Socialist organizations attended.

The Summer School.

The third season at Barrow House, Keswick, was seriously affected by the outbreak of the war, many bookings being cancelled at short notice. Nevertheless, owing mainly to the two successful Conferences held under the auspices of the Research Department, the financial results of the season, considering the circumstances, were satisfactory. Altogether 213 different persons attended, as compared with 267 in 1913. The weather was excellent, and none of the organized excursions had to be given up. From July 4th to the 11th Barrow House was occupied by a private party, composed chiefly of members of the Bradford I.L.P. The following week the National Administrative Council of the I.L.P. were in possession. From July 18th to August 1st two Conferences were organized by the Research Department. The first Conference dealt with the Control of Industry. A supplementary meeting was addressed by Lala Lajpat Rai and the Hon. Bhupendranath Basu on the Reformist

Dr. Abstract of Accounts for Year

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	1914. £ s. d.
To Receipts during Year, viz.:—			
Subscriptions from Members ...	872 13 6		1,028 12 0
Do. Special	210 0 0		260 0 0
Do. from Associates ...	56 3 10		63 7 4
Do. from Non-Members and Sundry Receipts	34 16 1		37 17 2
Do. for Cost of Tract No. 178	47 10 0		
Do. for Furnishing Fund...	155 10 1		
Do. Cost of certain Common Room Furniture presented	50 19 3		
		1,427 12 9	
Sale of Literature, etc. (including £25, estimated proceeds of sale of volumes)	169 13 10½		198 17 10½
Do. Volumes by A. C. Fifield ...	3 0 8		12 0 0
		172 14 6½	
Advertisements		15 5 0	27 11 1
Royalties		2 10 2	4 19 1
Book Box Fees		53 0 0	49 18 6
Book Boxes and Library:— Books lost and paid for... ...		3 3 1	1 12 8
Suburban and Provincial Lectures: Grant		8 13 6	32 5 0
Annual Conference:—			8 10 0
Contributions towards expenses by Local Societies		2 3 6	*Sundry receipts* 6 0 0
Surplus of Kingsway Hall Lectures	171 11 0		313 3 0
Do. M. Vandervelde's Address	80 1 1		
Do. Annual Dinner	3 1 0		3 17 0
		254 13 1	
Summer School:— Receipts		753 6 8	754 1 8½
Common Room:—			121 19 11¼ *Balances*
Subscriptions received	144 4 6		
Catering Receipts	17 13 3		
		161 17 9	
Net Proceeds of Sales of "The Rural Problem"		57 1 5	
Interest on Deposits...		4 4 0	5 8 2
Balance at Debit of Society:—			
Sundry Creditors	78 7 10¼		
Due to Geo. Standring	150 0 0		
Loan for "The Rural Problem"...	100 0 0		
	328 7 10¼		
Less Sundry Debtors 4 1 1			
Bank Balances ... 1 14 3	5 15 4		
		322 12 6¼	83 4 5¾
		£3,238 17 11¾	£3,013 5 0

ding 31st March, 1915. Cr.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	1914. £ s. d.
BALANCE at Debit of Society, 31st March, 1914		83 4 5¾	188 16 2
EXPENDITURE DURING YEAR :—			
Hire of Halls for Lectures		44 2 0	67 14 6
Purchase of Literature	36 2 11		44 1 6
Printing and Advertising Tracts ..	172 19 9		155 19 8
Do. Tract No. 178 (see contra) .	47 10 0		
		256 12 8	
Printing FABIAN NEWS	112 3 6		134 9 0
General Printing	62 3 0		77 2 6
		174 6 6	
Grants and Fees to other bodies :—			
Labor Party	13 9 2		15 15 4
International Socialist Bureau ...	5 0 0		19 17 6
War Emergency: Workers' National Committee	2 2 0		
Sundries	4 18 6		28 2 6
		25 9 8	
Office Expenses, viz. :—			
Salaries	617 10 5		812 8 2
Rent, including clearing, etc., at Clement's Inn	91 11 7		189 9 9
Do. and Rates at 25 Tothill St., less subletting	102 4 1		
Housekeeper, Cleaning, Coals, Light, etc.	28 15 6½		
Postage, Parcels, and Telephone...	177 7 11		192 8 5½
Printer: Despatching NEWS ...	29 18 6		33 16 6
Addressing Machine	21 8 7		
Stationery and Miscellaneous ...	110 2 10		89 1 0¾
		1,178 19 5½	
Book Box and Library, Purchases, etc.		14 16 6	18 4 3
Provincial and Suburban Lectures ...		8 13 6	40 15 0
Summer School :—			
Working Expenses	673 18 7¼		768 1 7¾
Loan Repaid and Interest on Loans	54 16 5		108 0 0
Balance carried forward	24 11 7¾		
		753 6 8	
Annual Conference Expenses ...		20 5 8	25 11 0
Common Room :—			
Expenditure, including Rent ...	51 2 0		
Placed on Deposit...	100 0 0		
Balance carried forward	10 15 9		
		161 17 9	3 10 6
"Rural Problem," Cost of Production		156 9 6	*Organizer's expenses*
Furniture and Fixings at 25 Tothill Street, and Cost of Moving ...	226 6 3½		
Common Room Furniture presented	50 19 3		
		277 5 6½	
Belgian Relief Fund: Proceeds of Meeting (per contra)		80 1 1	
Speakers' Class: Balance of Cost ...		3 7 0	
		£3,238 17 11¾	£3,013 5 0

Movement in India. The second Conference discussed the Working of Industrial Insurance. Details of the Conferences are given elsewhere. The usual Summer Session commenced on August 1st. The lecture program was considerably upset as, owing to the national crisis, several lecturers were unable to fulfil their engagements; but in every case substitutes were secured. The lecturers and subjects were as follows: E. R. Pease, "The Origin of the Fabian Society," "The Control of the Liquor Traffic," and "Syndicalism"; G. Stafford Whitby, "The Federated Malay States"; S. K. Ratcliffe, "Social Change in America"; Miss Lilian Whitehouse, "Primitive Woman"; A. Clutton Brock, "The Nature and Value of Art"; F. Lawson Dodd, "What Socialism Means to Me" and "The Insurance Act in Relation to the Medical Problem"; the Rev. P. E. T. Widdrington, "The Relation of the Church to the Socialist Movement"; A. D. Lindsay, "Bergson's Philosophy" and "The Philosophy of Norman Angell"; and Professor Edith Morley, "The University in the Democratic State." A paper by Emil Davies on "The Possibilities of the Post Office" was read by the Director.

The Directors of the School were Sidney Webb, Mrs. Sidney Webb, E. R. Pease, S. K. Ratcliffe, F. Lawson Dodd, and H. D. Harben. Miss Hankinson, as Manager, ably overcame the many administrative difficulties caused by the dislocation of the season's arrangements.

Subject Groups.

Fabian Research Department.

The Department now numbers 202 members as against 178 at this time last year. There are in addition 45 subscribers, to many of whom the Department is indebted for valuable assistance in those parts of the various enquiries about which they had special knowledge.

The work of the Department is under three Committees of Enquiry, dealing respectively with the Control of Industry, Social Insurance and International Agreement; and two Joint Committees, one with the Fabian Women's Group and one with the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the Executive Committee of the Labor Party for the Publication of a Labor Year Book.

The Committee of Enquiry into the Control of Industry has issued Part II. of its Report dealing with the Co-operative Movement, and in a few weeks will issue Part III., dealing with State and Municipal Enterprise. Part IV. will be devoted to the Attempt by Trade Unions and Professional Associations to Control the Industries by which they Live. Part V. will give the Committee's Joint Conclusions and its Forecast of the Inevitable Partnership between Consumers and Producers.

The work of the Committee on Part IV., and its collection of materials relative to Trade Unionism and Professional Associations from all over the world have led to the general investigation of Trade Union organization. A series of "Studies in Trade Union-

ism," to be published in parts at sevenpence each, is in preparation. Among the earlier numbers will be "Trade Unionism in the Railway Industry," by G. D. H. Cole; "Trade Unionism in Germany," by W. Stephen Sanders; "Trade Unionism in the Cotton Industry," by W. Mellor; and "Trade Unionism in the Engineering Industry," by G. D. H. Cole.

A series of meetings was held in connection with this Enquiry during the winter, as follows :—

"Associations of Professionals: I. Medical"—Dr. Lawson Dodd, January 14th.

"Trade Unionism: Amalgamation v. Federation"—G. D. H. Cole, January 28th.

"Associations of Professionals: II. Engineering"—Mrs. Sidney Webb, February 11th.

"Trade Unionism in Italy"—Mrs. Townshend, February 25th.

"Associations of Professionals: III. Teaching"—Mrs. Sidney Webb, March 11th.

"Trade Unionism: Benefits"—Wm. Mellor, March 25th.

A second series has been arranged to be held during the spring.

The Committee on Insurance, which last year published the Report on the Working of the Insurance Act, published this year a Report on Industrial Insurance, as a supplement of *The New Statesman* of March 13th, 1915.

The International Agreement Committee was established in January its object being to enquire into the means of preventing future wars. At present it is investigating the possible machinery for Arbitration and Conciliation in disputes between independent Sovereign States. Mr. L. S. Woolf is preparing a memorandum on the subject. A Conference at Barrow House, Keswick, has been arranged for the Whitsun week-end, where the question will be discussed.

The Joint Committee with the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the Executive Committee of the Labor Party was established in January, with the proviso that the preparation of the materials for the Labor Year Book should be undertaken by the Research Department, the money for the necessary expense being found by the other two bodies. The Year Book will give detailed statistical information on Industrial and Governmental Organization, and will be published in the autumn.

The Joint Committee with the Fabian Women's Group was formed in March, 1915, as the result of a resolution passed at the Members' Meeting of the Society, for the purpose of preparing a Report on the problem "Labor after the War," with special reference to :—

(a) The return to industrial life of men with the colours;
(b) The consequent displacement of emergency labour;
(c) The value of social and industrial experiments initiated during the war.

The Department has been able to respond to many requests for information on the subjects under investigation.

The Department held a conference at Barrow House, near Keswick, July 18th-25th, on the Control of Industry. Papers were given on the following subjects :—

"The Self-governing Workshop," by B. Williams; "The Co-Operative Movement," by L. S. Woolf; "Governments, Municipal or National, as Associations of Producers," by Sidney Webb; "The Present Position of Trade Unions and Professional Organization," by Sidney Webb; "How can Trade Unions and Professional Associations be organized and directed so as to obtain effective participation in the Control of Industry," by W. Mellor; "The Necessary Basis of Partnership between Producer and Consumer in the Control of Industry," by G. D. H. Cole; "Collectivism and Guild Socialism," by Bernard Shaw.

A second conference, from July 25th to August 1st, was held on the Working of Industrial Insurance, and the following papers were read:—

"The Working of State Insurance in Germany, and the attitude towards it of the German Socialist Democratic Party," by W. Stephen Sanders; "Insurance Act," by Sidney Webb; "A National Provision for Maternity," by Miss Margaret Bondfield; "The Working of Unemployed Insurance," by F. W. Keeling; "Prevention of Tuberculosis and Venereal Disease, and the part to be played by Insurance," by Sidney Webb; "Actuarial Aspect of Industrial Life Insurance," by James Bacon, F.I.A.; "Insurance under Socialism," by Mrs. Webb.

The work of the Department has grown to the extent that standing charges have to be met each year in Rent, Salaries and General Office Expenditure of £300. So far this has been done by the support of our members and subscribers; but the increased activities of the Department and heavy commitments for forthcoming publications and investigations have made it imperative that the financial position should be strengthened. As a first effort to raise the money that is needed, a separate "Printing Fund" has been established. For this, and for the general account, donations and annual subscriptions are urgently required.

The Women's Group.

The Seventh Annual Report of the Women's Group for the year ending December 31st, 1914, was issued in January. Two Tracts have been published by the Society during the year. Number 4 of the Women's Group Series on "The Economic Foundations of the Women's Movement" was issued in June; "The War; Women; and Unemployment, No. 5 of the series, was published in March last. The latter Tract is in two Parts: Part I., "Unemployment among Women Wage Earners, and how to deal with it"; Part II., "The Position of Women in the Control of Industry and Supply." In March a Conference was held to discuss the question of the need for further Trade Schools for women and girls. Many associations interested in this question sent representatives. Dr. Fairfield was in the chair, and the speakers were Miss Susan Lawrence, Miss Evelyn March Phillipps, Miss Plowright and Miss Zimmern. As a result of the Conference the Group is now engaged upon an enquiry as to the trades most suitable for girls, the

necessary training, and future prospects. Other lectures during the year have been "The Women's Municipal Party," Mrs. Stanbury; "Organization of Skilled Domestic Service," Mrs. McKillop; "The Development of Trade Schools and the Need for Better Training," Dr. Fairfield; "The Right of Married Women to Continue in their Professions after Marriage," Mrs. Stockman; "State Pensions for Childless Widows of Soldiers and Sailors," Mrs. Rackham. The Right to Work Committee have kept in touch with important questions concerning women's labour. The Domestic Sub-Committee have collected information regarding schemes for the re-organization of Domestic Service, and propose shortly to hold a meeting to discuss "The Household Problem and its Solution." At the beginning of the war a small committee was formed to co-operate with other societies to obtain better conditions for the dependants of soldiers and sailors. A Joint Committee has been formed of members of the Research Department and the Women's Group to investigate certain problems of labor arising out of the war. The Group is affiliated to the National Union of Women Workers. It is represented on the Advisory Committee of the Women's Emergency Corps and the Joint Food Supply Committee of Associated Women's Societies; it has also sent delegates to various Conferences, including the International Overseas Suffrage Conference, the Fabian Conference, and a preliminary Conference to discuss the Government's War Service for Women, also to the meetings of the Criminal Law Amendment Committee. Two resolutions (a) protesting against the action of the London County Council in imposing celibacy upon its women medical officers, (b) asking for the immediate increase in the number of Trade Schools for boys and girls with maintenance grants, were carried unanimously and forwarded to the London County Council prior to the war. In July the Group passed a resolution calling upon the Government to give immediate facilities for the Bill (then before the House) for the Registration of Nurses. A copy was sent to all members of the Cabinet and to the Labor members of the House of Commons. At the outbreak of war the Executive Committee decided to continue ordinary Group activities, but to focus them as far as possible upon the particular problems affecting the economic position of women upon which light has been shown during the national crisis. In connection with the Government's War Service for Women, the Board of Trade asked the Group to co-operate by sending out forms of registration to its members. The question of safeguards in connection with this scheme, both for men and for women, is at present under consideration.

The Fabian Nursery.

The Fabian Nursery, judged by accepted standards, has had a successful year. It has held meetings regularly, and these have been well attended, and the membership has steadily increased. During the year the meetings have been thrown open to members of the London University Fabian Society who, in turn, now admit members of the Nursery to their Study Circle.

The subject matter of the lectures has been various, ranging from general to specific Socialism. Under the former heading may be included such lectures as "The University in the Democratic State," by Professor Edith Morley, and short papers on "My View of Socialism," read by three members of the Nursery at a meeting in January. Lectures dealing with specific problems for Socialists include Sidney Webb's "The Problems set to us by the War," Edward Pease's "Finance and the War," and Clifford Allen's "Never again must Socialists Fight: a Discussion on Non-Resistance and the General Strike." Desmond MacCarthy's address on "The Statesman and the Artist," given in the pre-war period, must also be included under this heading. The lecture that was followed by the keenest debate was Bernard Shaw's on "The War." At the meeting on January 13th, 1915, St. John G. Ervine read his play, "John Ferguson: a Tragedy." Members of the Nursery continue to lecture for the I.L.P., and some are active in the Hermes Club and other organizations.

The Education Group.

The Education Group prepared a course of Lectures for 1914-15, but as a large proportion of the members of the Group became actively engaged on local distress committees and other work connected with the war, it was decided not to carry out the scheme.

Provincial and University Fabian Societies.

No new provincial societies have been formed this year, and the society at Darwen has dissolved. Several societies have suspended activities owing to the war. The number of provincial societies is now thirty, and those connected with universities eleven.

During the year the University Socialist Federation, to which all the University Fabian Societies are affiliated, has carried on an energetic intensive campaign for strengthening the Socialist Movement in Universities and other kindred educational centres. A Fabian Society was founded at Sheffield University and a branch of the Church Socialist League at Lampeter College. The *University Socialist* magazine has been given up, and a terminal *Bulletin* is issued in its stead. There have been published a study circle syllabus on "The Principles of Socialism," drawn up by G. D. H. Cole, and an exhaustive handbook on "The Organization of a University Socialist Society." The second Annual Conference, in April, 1913, and the third Annual Conference, in April, 1914, were held at Barrow House, and in the matter of numbers and enthusiasm were increasingly successful.

London Local Groups.

The Clapham Group has held a series of meetings, open to the public, at which lectures and discussions took place. The Paddington and Marylebone Group has carried on a course of lectures, and the Streatham Group has held regular meetings, at which lectures have been given.

Statistics of Membership.

The following table indicates the changes in membership during the past year :—

	London.	Provincial Societies.	Provinces elsewhere.	University Societies.	Abroad.	Total.
Men ...	756	233	352	325	94	**1760**
Women ...	536	52	122	82	36	**828**
Total ...	**1292**	**285**	**474**	**407**	**130**	**2588**
1914 ...	1329	304	487	541	125	2786
Increase ...	—	—	—	—	5	—
Decrease	37	19	13	134	—	198

The considerable decline in the membership of the Society is mainly attributable to a writing off of lapsed members of University Fabian Societies. The war has affected the applications to join the Society, the number of members elected during the year being 235, as compared with 297 in the previous year. Removals by death, resignation, and default amounted to 433, an increase of 134 on 1913-14. The number of associates is 245, a decrease of 65 on the year, mainly in associates of University Societies. The number of members of Provincial Societies who are not members of the London Society is about [illegible].

Finance.

The war and the expense of removal to new offices have adversely affected our finances for the past year. Our ordinary subscriptions show a serious decline, due no doubt to the constant calls on our members for the various war funds, and in some cases to loss of income. But if the Furnishing Fund is included, the total sum received is larger than last year.

It will be noticed that one of our Tracts was paid for by a special contribution, which we are to refund, as far as possible, out of the proceeds of the Tract when sold. As for Literature, we may, perhaps, congratulate ourselves that the decline in sales is, in the circumstances, no greater than appears.

The financial results of the publication of "The Rural Problem" have not been as favorable as we hoped. At present there is a deficit on the account of £100, which has been temporarily met by a loan of a like amount.

When the war broke out we were in the midst of a very successful season at the Summer School. Many of the guests had to leave at once, and many others cancelled their bookings. It is, therefore, a matter for congratulation that we have been able out of the surplus to repay £50 of the outstanding loan, leaving only £50 still to be repaid. We had also arranged for a series of lectures by Bernard Shaw at Kingsway Hall, which, after some hesitation, we decided to

carry through. Although we were unable to sell all the tickets, we secured full audiences, and a substantial balance on the right side.

Nevertheless, the situation at the end of the year is sufficiently serious. We have been unable to pay our printer to the extent of £150, and the nett liabilities of the Society have increased from £83 at the beginning of the year to £323 at its close. It should, however, be added that the removal and refurnishing cost £70 in excess of the special fund subscribed for it; that £21 was spent on an addressing machine, and the removal entailed various small charges which would bring up the aggregate of items which will not recur to over £100.